

DOE Nuclear Energy University Program grants are expected to bolster universities' ability to conduct nuclear energy research that is relevant to DOE's mission.

Universities reap roughly 6 million in nuclear education grants from DOE, CAES

by [Kortny Rolston](#), INL Communications

Universities across the United States will receive roughly \$6 million from the U.S. Department of Energy to buoy their nuclear energy research and education programs.

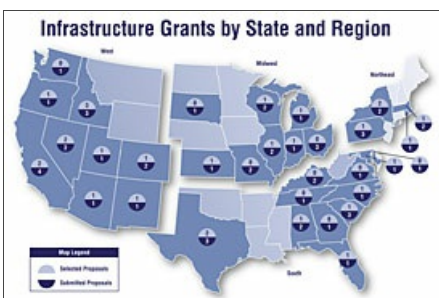
Infrastructure grants will go to 29 U.S. universities in 23 states through Nuclear Energy University Programs, a DOE Office of Nuclear Energy initiative administered by Idaho National Laboratory's [Center for Advanced Energy Studies](#) staff. The goal is to improve universities' ability to conduct nuclear energy research and educate students entering the nuclear field. The maximum award per university is \$300,000.

The awards were announced in June, and Idaho's public universities will receive more than \$578,000 through the program. [Boise State University](#), [Idaho State University](#) and [University of Idaho](#) were awarded grants (the individual amounts have not been released) for new laboratory and classroom equipment.

"The Idaho universities submitted really strong proposals," said Marsha Lambregts, NEUP program manager. "The selection committee felt the equipment the universities proposed buying would really strengthen their programs and the education their students receive."



Infrastructure and equipment funded through this NEUP initiative include research reactors instrumentation, gloveboxes and analytical equipment.



[Read the Infrastructure Grants Fact Sheet.](#)

universities have access to it.

University of Idaho plans to purchase a new high-temperature oven and other laboratory equipment to research graphite and its use in the latest designs for the next generation of nuclear reactors (referred to as the [Next Generation Nuclear Plant](#) or [Gen IV project](#)).

"Graphite is happy in extreme reactor environments with high temperatures and high amounts of radiation, but there is still a lot we don't know about it and how it will react with other materials," said Dr. Fred Gunnerson, University of Idaho's director of nuclear engineering. "This equipment will really help us with our research."

Both UI and ISU plan to house much of the new equipment in labs at CAES.

That way, said Dr. Jason Harris of Idaho State University, researchers from INL and other

"This will really be multi-use equipment that will benefit a lot of groups," he said. "Researchers and students from ISU, UI and Boise will be able to use it and so will INL scientists."

Idaho nuclear engineering and science students also were awarded nearly \$200,000 in scholarships and fellowships through NEUP.

Five Idaho State and four University of Idaho undergraduate students won \$5,000 scholarships to help pay for college for the next year. Ben Baker, an Idaho State University student, will receive a \$150,000 fellowship over the next three years to help pay for his graduate studies and research.

The scholarship recipients are: Bryon Curnutt, Yvonne Fields, Dacoda Hale, Joshua Larson and Bruce Pierson of Idaho State University; and Andrew Dahlke, Nicholas Eimers, Peter Wells and Zack Wuthrich of the University of Idaho.

Here is what Idaho's three research universities plan to purchase with their grant money:

Boise State University – Ion slicer for transmission electron microscopy sample preparation of nuclear materials

Idaho State University – Infrastructure support for analytical and health physics laboratory instrumentation

"DOE NE is committed to training the next generation of nuclear scientists and engineers and these scholarships and fellowships are a way to do that," Lambregts said.

[Feature Archive](#)

University of Idaho – Equipment to establish medium- to higher-temperature material characterization capability